

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

Editorial Opinions of the Leading Journals Upon Current Topics—Compiled Every Day for the Evening Telegraph.

THE DEATH KNEEL OF THE "RING."

From the N. Y. Times.

A very remarkable article of the World on the misgovernment of this city at this particular moment presses upon the reputable section of the Democratic party. This new manifesto will not surprise any one who has read the World attentively of late. It has left off criticizing its political opponents, and boldly come forward with a distinct policy of its own. Its enemies assert that in taking this course it is not actuated by the purest motives. That sort of retort is the very one which we naturally look for from men who are known to be dishonest themselves. It is part of their tactics to vilify the motives of all who threaten to expose their misdeeds. We have nothing to do with these charges, and it is no part of our duty on this occasion to inquire why it happens that the World has proclaimed "war to the knife" against the "ring." We are very well contented to find it fighting for the same object as ourselves. Its assistance in a good cause would be welcome even if its foes could substantiate statements which at present are entirely unsupported by evidence.

We have again and again called the attention of all honest Democrats to one plain fact—namely, that the corrupt and misgovernment of this city, the shameful judiciary (with certain exceptions), and the general collapse of law and order, are taken by the country at large as the natural outcome of Democratic principles. When Democrats say to the people, "Place the Government in our hands and see what we will make out of it," the people answer, "We can see that already in New York city. Some of your well-known judges are in league with the vilest criminals, and your citizens are taxed heavily for the maintenance of tricksters and social outlaws." Thus a stigma of the blackest kind has been affixed to the whole party. All over the civilized world the name of "New York Democracy" has come to be identified with a vast system of robbery and spoliation. The more scrupulous members of the party naturally feel this to be an injustice. In the country, especially, Democrats know that they are suffering for a sin which they did not commit, and could not prevent others from committing. It is not too much to say that our city government is doing them every day as much harm as all their mistakes during the war combined. What prospect is there of winning a Presidential election with this heavy disgrace clinging to them?

The World has been one of the first of the Democratic journals to acknowledge the justice of these considerations. The time is ripe for a change. A Governor will have to be elected, and a still more important contest will then require study and preparation. In what condition are the Democracy for meeting these trials of strength? The World tells us very frankly. The "ring" has "debauched politics and defiled the name of Democracy." A little knot of men "have plundered us of millions yearly, obstructed our material growth, made our markets, our wharves and piers and streets, more monuments of their rapacity, our elections a farce, and now have put judges in our very court houses to sell injustice for a price." Our readers have often met with denunciations of that kind in these columns. But it is like a new revelation to receive them from the World. Our contemporary, however, is speaking not against its party, but in the truest and best interests of that party. The "ring" will, of course, howl at it. Corrupt judges may set their infamous tools to work in the hope of averting the retribution which is certain to fall on their heads some day. But if the better sort of Democrats do not take the lessons which the World now reads them seriously to heart, they will lose the best opportunity they have had for some years past of recovering a dreary expanse of lost ground.

Future historians may have to record that this schism in the Democratic ranks was the precursor of the revival of a party which has its uses no less than our own. The vital principle of parliamentary government is that there should be two parties in the country—one to govern, the other to exercise the wholesome check of opposition. The Democrats have not known how to fulfill the latter function, and for a long period they have abandoned themselves to false leaders, and fallen into deep pits while pursuing shadows. The World would summon them to that higher prill which is still open to them, and it is of the moment for any man to turn round and tell us that the World is only playing a game. The question is, Does the World speak the truth or not? We know, and everybody in the country knows, that it does. This one city is accomplishing the ruin of a party still great, in spite of its numberless errors. New York is drinking the life blood of Democracy. Everywhere Democrats ought to quite their strength in one tremendous blow at the infamous clique who would peddle away the honor of the nation without one tinge of remorse. The rural members of the party ought to ally themselves with every honest Democrat they can find in New York. They will never have so good a chance again as they have at their command now. It is the turning point in the checkered history of this party, and it is rescued from municipal which has become almost a national scandal, from licensed assassins who do the work of politics, and from officers of the law, high and low, whose hands are soiled with dishonest gold, if not with blood.

AMERICAN JUDGES.

From the London Saturday Review.

Few things are full of uglier omen for the future of the United States than the growing disrespect for the judicial body which seems to be spreading itself through the country. The stories which now reach us are widely different from anything heard before of American judges. The worst we formerly knew of the bench, even in the wildest frontier States, was that its occupants did not wear precisely the same awful costume and practise the same dignified usages as the judges and barons of Westminster Hall; but it was probable that they knew a great deal more of law than anybody about them, and that they did not finish from applying what they knew. Even the functionary who decided the celebrated case of Silas Fixings was probably right in his conclusions, and certainly he was not afraid to back them. But now almost every mail brings us proof that in the largest and not the least civilized of the older States charges of flagrant corruption against judges are of every-day occurrence, and though it is every now and then urged that the character of such a gentleman is beyond suspicion, or that the evidence is not thought in such or such a case to warrant the accusation, nobody dreams that the corrupt taking of money or

money's worth for justice by a judge is inconceivable or impossible, or even uncommon. If Americans were in the habit of comparing the facts which fall under their immediate notice with the experience and history of other communities, they would see that this phenomenon of judicial corruption, generally believed, but acquiesced in without much very serious complaint, has no parallel or example since the beginning of civilization. Some of its mischievous consequences are beginning to be felt, not only by simple Erie bondholders, but by the English legal profession. The two branches of the English race knew curiously little of one another till the War of Secession, but there was an exception to this ignorance in the steady interchange of judicial precedents. There were certain American names which were appealed to here with scarcely less confidence than Coke or Mansfield. But quite recently English judges have been known to shrink from recognizing the authority of modern American cases, and very possibly not quite fairly distinguishing between one man and another, or between one State and another, have significantly inquired what these charges of corruption meant.

When an English gentleman deputed by some railway bondholders addressed the New York Chamber of Commerce the other day on the effect of the action of the New York judges upon the interests which he represented, the Chamber broadly admitted the corrupt origin of this judicial intervention, but attributed it to the ignorance of alien constituencies. This merely meant that the judges of the State of New York are electives, and that the Irish vote is very powerful in the American judiciary, and is not to be expected until Irishmen are debarred from voting, or until the people give up the direct appointment of public servants, it may be long before the reputation of American judges recovers itself. It is satisfactory, therefore, to find one of the most thoughtful of American newspapers finding the source of the evil less in the mode of appointing judges than in the mode of admitting legal practitioners. It is in fact quite clear, from English experience, that the best security for learning and purity in the bench is learning and a feeling of honor among the bar. The most powerful of all forms of public opinion is professional opinion, and if the professional feeling of the New York practitioners revolted against ignorance and corruption as mortal sins in a judge, the machinery for creating judges would lose most of its importance. The mere discomfort of sitting in a court full of men of greater knowledge and higher honor than himself would keep the incapable party hack from desiring a seat on the bench; and beyond this, the experience of several communities shows that a popular constituency charged with the selection of functionaries for whom professional qualifications are required in the discharge of their duty, will not be misled by the suggestions of professional opinion. But the American legislatures have, we are told, adopted of late the policy of nearly open admission to the legal profession, the advocates of the measure defending it on the extraordinarily fallacious ground that there is no more reason why special conditions should be demanded for the calling of a grocer or a butcher. As one would have thought it enough to reply that the only callings which it is best for the public interest to leave quite open are those to which the maxim *quis eum optat* applies, and that no client can possibly tell whether a given lawyer can construe a legislative enactment correctly, the only inference which can be drawn from such an argument is an inference as to the class to whom it was considered worth while to address it. But the fact seems to be that in most American States persons are now admitted to the mixed profession of barrister and attorney with the least possible inquiry into their knowledge or character. The result, we need scarcely say, is very unlike that of a lax system of admission to the English bar. In this country the moral effects of all-powerful traditions have to be allowed for, and the effect of an undoubtedly unsatisfactory system of previous preparation is not that English barristers are unlearned, but that they are narrow. Even here, however, it is worth while noticing that the experience of the American States shows that, under a system of unchecked competition, the race is in the long run to the ignorant and the unscrupulous. Everybody of course would suppose, and we are carefully informed, that even in New York city there are many skillful and honorable practitioners; but they seem to consider it their chief duty to their clients to keep their business out of court, and hence little moral influence is brought to bear on the bench by this class.

It is very difficult for an Englishman to judge of how many American States, and even to what parts of the State of New York, the suspicion of judicial corruption widely extends. Yet there are many signs that the sacredness of the judicial office is passing away everywhere. Nobody has ventured to breathe a word against the character of the Judges of the United States; but yet there is evidently no scruple in packing for party purposes the Supreme Court, probably in some respects the most august tribunal in the world. The party now all-powerful evidently intends not merely to keep Democrats and Southern partisans out of it (which under existing circumstances would be scarcely wonderful), but to deny entrance into it to all but its own opinions. The other day President Grant, having two vacancies in the Court to fill up, proposed for them Mr. Stanton, the late Secretary of War, and Mr. Hoar, the present Attorney-General. Mr. Stanton, who was thought to be dying, was a very great administrator, but one of the bitterest of partisans. Mr. Hoar, though a Republican, is thought to be wedded to a high standard of judicial purity and independence. The Senate instantly confirmed the appointment of Mr. Stanton with almost indecent haste, but suspended its approval of Mr. Hoar's nomination. This plain intimation to the President that none but the extreme party appointments would be palatable to that branch of the American Legislature which is all but omnipotent is nearly as disastrous a symptom of one sort as the New York stories are of another.

GHOSTS IN ST. LOUIS.

From the N. Y. Tribune.

The city of St. Louis (whether it may or may not become the capital of the United States) is, beyond question, easily first of all our villages, either Down-Eastern or Far-Western, in all matters ghostly, thaumaturgical, spectral, magical, or miscellaneous. Only a little while ago we recorded the presence in St. Louis of the great Dr. Manchester, who is renowned for undertaking to raise the dead, and still more renowned for not doing it. But this angelic doctor is now forgotten in the very scene of his illustrious failures. A few days since, a young woman, Miss Jennie Debonaire, called upon a police cap-

tain. Miss Jennie was not, in spite of her name (to quote a line from Milton), "no burzum, bliths, and debonair," for she has seen things calculated to curdle her blood, and make her flowing ringlets somewhat perpendicular and preeningly. Only for five days had she been domiciled at a house in Morgan street. Every night a man appears to her and says that his name is not Giles Serrogins but Joseph Scott. Let not the reader interpret this appearance to the disadvantage of Miss Jennie a virgin purity, for the man is spectral and can do no harm. Even if he were veritable flesh and bone, his *tout ensemble* is not of a kind to kindle the fires of passion; for, though he has "a fair complexion and brown, curly hair," advantages sufficient to catch a woman's eye, he "has also a deep gash in his throat, a cut on his head, and he is all covered with blood." No gallant, thriving wooer ever came in this plight; and moreover, his name is Joseph, not Joseph Scott, nor yet Joseph Andrew, but Mr. Joseph Scott. This phantom told the trembling Miss Debonaire that (while in the flesh) he was slaughtered by one Philip Amburg, who stole his money and buried it (with the body) in the cellar of that very house. This he proceeded to prove to a demonstration; for he led the trembling maiden to the cellar and showed her upon which side he was buried and upon which side the spoils were deposited. After this he became a little amorous, demanded a kiss, which showed that, though his throat was all, he had yet all his wits about him, and then he chafed, and pathetically implored her to speak to an undertaker and have his bones removed from their present ignominious resting place to some regular cemetery, adding that she was at liberty also to disinter the money, pay the bills out of it, and keep the balance for her own personal use. He also offered to confer upon her the power of curing diseases, making her Dr. Jennie Debonaire without the trouble of studying for a diploma. And then he exhaled again, whether with or without a kiss we are not informed.

These were, indeed, astounding statements. The captain of the police was puzzled, but made a memorandum on the station book. A regiment of "spiritualists" went into permanent session in the haunted house, ready to cross-examine Joseph Scott; and two reporters called for "an interview." They learned very little, and, of course, made very long and affecting reports in their respective newspapers. But what is most remarkable is that, though "the spiritualists" have assiduously dug in the cellar, enlarging it to twice its original capacity, they don't find any bones. This would be of very little consequence by itself; but, mournful to relate, they don't find Mr. Joseph Scott's money either. At least, if they do, they keep it a dead secret and refuse to take the public into their confidence. Still we must confess that it is a very remarkable case. Should any rival scoff at the tale, the proper way to put him down is to quote at him the stock argument of "the spiritualists":—"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." And why should there not be "more things" in a St. Louis cellar? Why not, we repeat, my not? Alas! even while we are writing of it, the mystery of the haunted house of St. Louis is exploded. The girl Jennie is no better than she should be. She and others had squatted in this house, and being determined to keep others out of it, they devised various apparatus for ghostly knocking and rapping. Jennie is looked up, the poor ghost is no longer perturbed, and the city of St. Louis no longer trembles. How many of these beautifully harrowing stories are to have this limping and potentless ending?

THE CASE OF FITZ-JOHN PORTER.

From the N. Y. Sun.

The agent of the Associated Press, on Wednesday, telegraphed from Washington a summary of the controversy touching the case of Fitz-John Porter, who, it will be remembered, was cashiered and declared, by a congressional act, to be forever after disqualified from holding any office of honor or trust under the Government of the United States. The reason for this sentence was simply that Porter, while commanding a corps of the Army of the Potomac under Pope, during the second Bull Run campaign, was criminally slow in marching to the assistance of the latter, and that, after arriving upon the flank of the enemy, within a short distance of the field of battle, he failed to attack, although positively ordered to do so.

Porter asserted at the time of his trial that he had marched as promptly and rapidly as possible toward the enemy, and that he failed to attack previous to the receipt of Pope's order, because he was convinced that the enemy was not only too strong, but too strongly entrenched, to leave him any hope of success; and that when he received Pope's order, which reached him shortly before sundown, it was then too late to obey it. He now claims to have obtained evidence from Rebel official reports showing that his convictions were correct in regard to the position and strength of the enemy. Upon this he makes an appeal to the President for an order relieving him from the disqualification imposed by the sentence of the court which tried him. As for this Rebel evidence, after having examined it carefully, we may say that it does not in the least affect the main question decided by the court, and that now, as before, the only fault to be found with that tribunal is that, when it found the accused guilty, it did not order him to be shot.

It is sometimes said, by way of excuse for Porter, that General Pope "labored under the misfortune of being the most disbelieved man in the army;" but it must not be forgotten that, truthful or untruthful, Pope was the legitimate commander of the army then in Virginia; that he had marched promptly in search of the enemy upon all occasions, fighting whenever and wherever he could find them; that, in this instance, he had actually outmarched the swift-footed Jackson, and placed his own hard-pressed forces between Jackson and Washington, while Porter's corps, fresh and active from the transports which had brought them from the James river, had been marched reluctantly and slowly towards the battle-field. There is no shadow of a doubt that Pope fought the enemy with determination, while Porter, although within sound of the battle, did not fight, though he must have known that, if Pope and he could not conquer together, neither could do it singly. He should have fought without orders, in accordance with the suggestion of McDowell, and when the orders finally reached him, even after the shades of night had gathered, he should have moved forward at once to the attack. With such troops as his—the best corps in our service—a better soldier would have hailed darkness as a fortunate ally against an enemy so numerous and strongly posted. Suppose Sherman had failed to attack the end of Mission Ridge, during the brilliant campaign against Chattanooga,

merely because he found the enemy posted upon an impregnable position, or that Thomas had declined to move against the face of that ridge for a like reason, who doubts that he should have had one less victory to inscribe upon our banners?

General Pope was responsible for the order requiring Porter to attack, and he alone was responsible for the plan upon which it was based. Porter's duty was to obey, and the excuses he gives for not obeying are precisely the reasons why his case should not be reconsidered.

SPANISH BARBARITIES IN CUBA—THE SHAMEFUL INDIFFERENCE OF OUR GOVERNMENT.

From the N. Y. Herald.

The remains of Greenwall, the victim of Spanish barbarity at Havana, were interred here on Wednesday. Though the friends of the unfortunate man, and those of his colleagues, who still remain in Cuba with his employers, used every means to prevent any demonstration, there was nevertheless a deep-seated feeling of indignation in the public mind. Wherever the matter was spoken of the Spaniards were execrated, and shame was felt at the pusillanimous conduct of our Government for its indifference to the many outrages upon Americans in Cuba. If Greenwall was not an American citizen he was a resident here, and left this city for Havana but a few weeks ago. But his companions, who were brutally wounded, were American citizens. This case of barbarity, however, was only one of many upon our citizens by the Spaniards in Cuba. We have had authentic accounts of many before. It is because the Government at Washington has failed to notice those previously that this occurred. Had reparation been demanded in previous cases, and protection to our citizens been insisted upon, we should not have heard of the brutal outrages on Greenwall and his companions. Our Consuls in Cuba and our navy in its waters might just as well be at home. They are utterly useless there. Well may the Spaniards despise us and laugh at the idea of the United States venturing to go to war with Spain. The most contemptible nation in the world would not suffer the indignities this republic has borne. Any little State would give better protection to its citizens. How has this mighty country fallen under the cowardly men who now rule at Washington!

Think of our degradation when the friends of poor Greenwall and the other victims of Spanish barbarity implore the people here to make no demonstration of indignation for fear of the consequences to those Americans who still remain in Cuba! We must not give vent to our feelings for fear the brutal outrages might murder the Americans that are left in Havana and other parts of the Island! American merchants in Cuba, as we are well informed, dare not send letters in their packages of correspondence for Cubans or for those who might be suspected of sympathizing with the Cuban cause. Such is the reign of terror under the volunteers. The so-called Spanish Government in the island is powerless and the mere instrument of a bloody revolutionary faction. American citizens are compelled for self-protection to deny their country and to hail as Englishmen or as other foreigners. We have no doubt that in this last case of barbarity our weak and timid Secretary of State will accept the hollow apologies and misrepresentations of Spanish officials, and that those same officials, contemptuously laughing at the impotency of our Government, will neither punish the criminals nor prevent similar outrages in the future. In all matters relative to Cuba and to what is occurring in that island now the Government of this great country has made itself contemptible. The republic is disgraced in the eyes of the world. Every true American must feel the shame of such humiliation.

RUIN TO THE RING.

From the N. Y. World.

The lawyers of this city, in their newly formed association, have offered a reward for the detection of the man who attempted to assassinate one of their number. They are evidently awake, at the outset, to the importance of their association and to their prospective duties. The popular estimation of the inefficiency of the administration of our city government, and the disposition of the people to array themselves against it for mutual protection, have been manifest in the frequent formation of these voluntary associations; some temporary, for a single object, and some more permanent in purpose and form. But the habit is growing, and it has pointed towards well-ordered and vigilant committees; for this direct action of the people seldom fails in its object. The people vote, and the ring leaders well know that a collision with any of these voluntary organizations, and a defeat, might make a legal agitation that they could not withstand. In this respect they were taught a lesson by the East Side Association at the last election. The honest Democrats are organizing against their misrule; the enthusiasm and power of the people will be with them.

The association of the lawyers for the honor of their profession and the purity of the administration of justice finds its ground and reason in the conduct of the judges whose acts and decisions mark them as ring adherents. This modern encroachment on the elevation and purity of the courts is an instance of the mischief which is to be resisted by a capable and comprehensive organization with votes and influence over votes. The Fifth avenue residents have associated to resent the ring's polluting pavement, and to find out the very men into whose pockets the profits of that job have gone. The East Side Association and the West Side Association long since organized to protect their property interests against the ring men in the city administration who delay and resist improvements, who make fraudulent contracts and extortionate assessments; and here and there the residential particular avenues and streets are organizing to resist the various wrongs sought to be imposed upon them by the ring in the guise of street improvements. The life insurance companies associated recently to resist an evident ring strike from Albany. Without further enumeration, it is clear that the people have learned the habit of organizing against the ring.

The World invites these organizations, and all who support them, one step further. The day of separate resistance to separate attacks of these ring thieves is over. The time has now come to break down and utterly destroy the ring itself. Its day is done.

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OFFICE OF THE CUMBERLAND COAL AND IRON COMPANY.

NOTICE OF STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING. A special meeting of the Stockholders of the Cumberland Coal and Iron Company has been called by the President and Directors of said Company, to be held at its office, No. 90 BROADWAY, corner Wall Street, in the city of New York, on the 13th day of February, 1870, at 12 o'clock M.

The objects of said meeting are:—To accept, as an increase of the powers of the Company, and as an amendment to its charter, the provision contained in the charter of the Consolidation Coal Company of Maryland, which renders it lawful for all bodies corporate to become subscribers for and owners of the capital stock of the last-named company; also, to consider and act upon the question of a consolidation with the last-named company and other companies having coal lands in Allegheny county, Md.; to arrange the terms of such consolidation and the manner of carrying the same into effect, and to authorize the Directors to effect the same; to authorize the Board of Directors of the Company to subscribe in its behalf for \$5,000,000 of the capital stock of said Consolidation Coal Company of Maryland, and to agree with that company upon the terms and conditions upon which such subscription shall be made, and to convey and transfer to the last-named Company in free payment for the amount of stock which may be so subscribed for, such portion of the lands and other properties of this Company, including its railroad, as may be agreed upon. And generally, to pass upon all questions which may arise touching such proposed consolidation, or transfer of property, or subscription for stocks, and the disposition to be made of the stock subscribed for, and if deemed expedient, to authorize a lease of the properties of this Company or any part thereof, and to make all alterations in the by-laws which said meeting may deem necessary or proper.

Notice is hereby given that, for the purpose of holding a stockholders' meeting of the Cumberland Coal and Iron Company on the 13th day of February next, the transfer books will close on SATURDAY, Jan. 29, 1870, at 2 o'clock P. M. By order of the Board of Directors. J. RICHARDS, Secretary. New York, Jan. 18, 1870. 130 3718

TO ALL WANTING FARMS IN A LOCALITY Exempt from Fevers and Lung Complaints.—To Farmers, Horticulturists, Mechanics, Capitalists, Gentlemen of Leisure, Invalids, and all wanting a homestead in a climate of unsurpassed salubrity, exempt from the rigors of a Northern winter, and in close connection with the commercial centres of the South. Few if any sections offer such a combination of inducements as the town of Aiken, S. C., and its vicinity for a desirable and permanent home. A pamphlet of 84 pages now ready, containing a description of the climate, soils, and the nature of the products in the vicinity of Aiken, especially fruit, cereals, cotton, corn, vegetables, etc., including extracts from letters of distinguished visitors, correspondents, action of town councils inviting emigrants, etc., to which is added a descriptive list of property for sale, including improved farms, orchards, vineyards, water power, kaolin deposits, unimproved lands, and town residences. For sale by E. J. C. WOOD, Real Estate Agent, Aiken, S. C. The book will be sent by mail on receipt of price, 25 cents. Address J. C. DERRY, Publisher, P. O. Box No. 1439, New York, and list of February, after that date at Aiken, S. C. (111 3718)

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